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# *Central Intelligence Bulletin*

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13 April 1970

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Approved For Release 2003/02/27 : CIA-RDP79T00975A016000040001-9

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No. 0088/70  
13 April 1970

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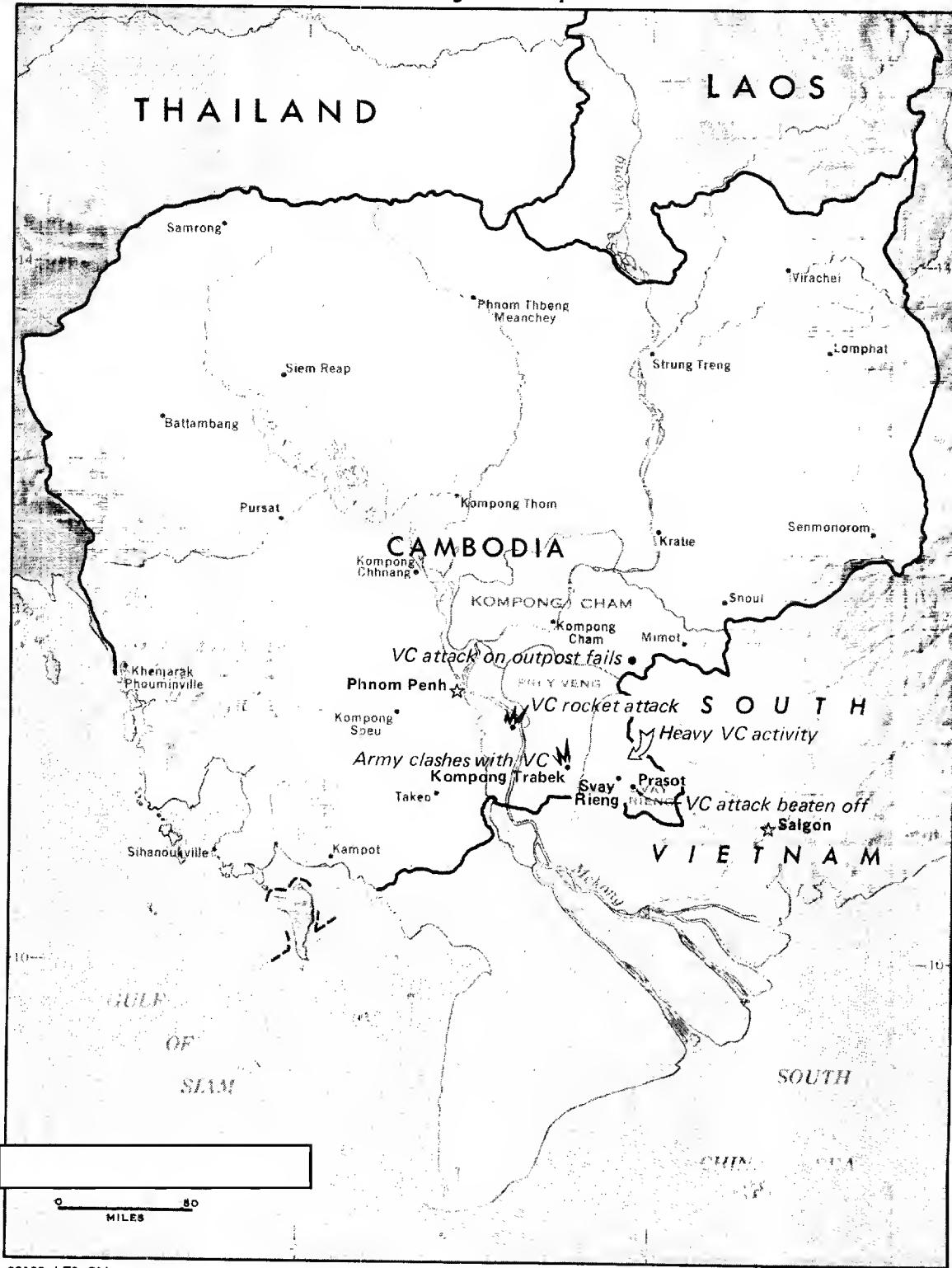
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## Vietnamese Communists Maintaining Military Pressure



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Cambodia: The Communists are keeping up military pressure on government forces near the border.

Large numbers of Viet Cong troops are still operating in eastern Svay Rieng Province, but there are no signs as yet that they intend to move on the provincial capital, where most of the government's forces are concentrated. Another Communist attack on the nearby town of Prasot was beaten off on 11 April.

Communist military activity is also on the rise in Prey Veng Province. On 11 April, Cambodian Army elements claimed to have engaged in house-to-house fighting with Viet Cong troops near the town of Kompong Trabek, some 50 miles southeast of Phnom Penh. Additionally, in the closest action to the capital thus far, the Communists reportedly made a rocket attack on the night of 8-9 April on a military encampment on the west side of the Mekong River about 25 miles southeast of Phnom Penh. There is no evidence available that suggests that these attacks are a prelude to any major offensive actions, however.

According to an unconfirmed press report, Communist troops attacked a Cambodian outpost in Kompong Cham Province on 12 April but were repulsed after a three-hour battle. The outpost is located near a key Communist base area, and local Cambodian officials recently have expressed considerable alarm over the buildup of Viet Cong forces there.

(Map)

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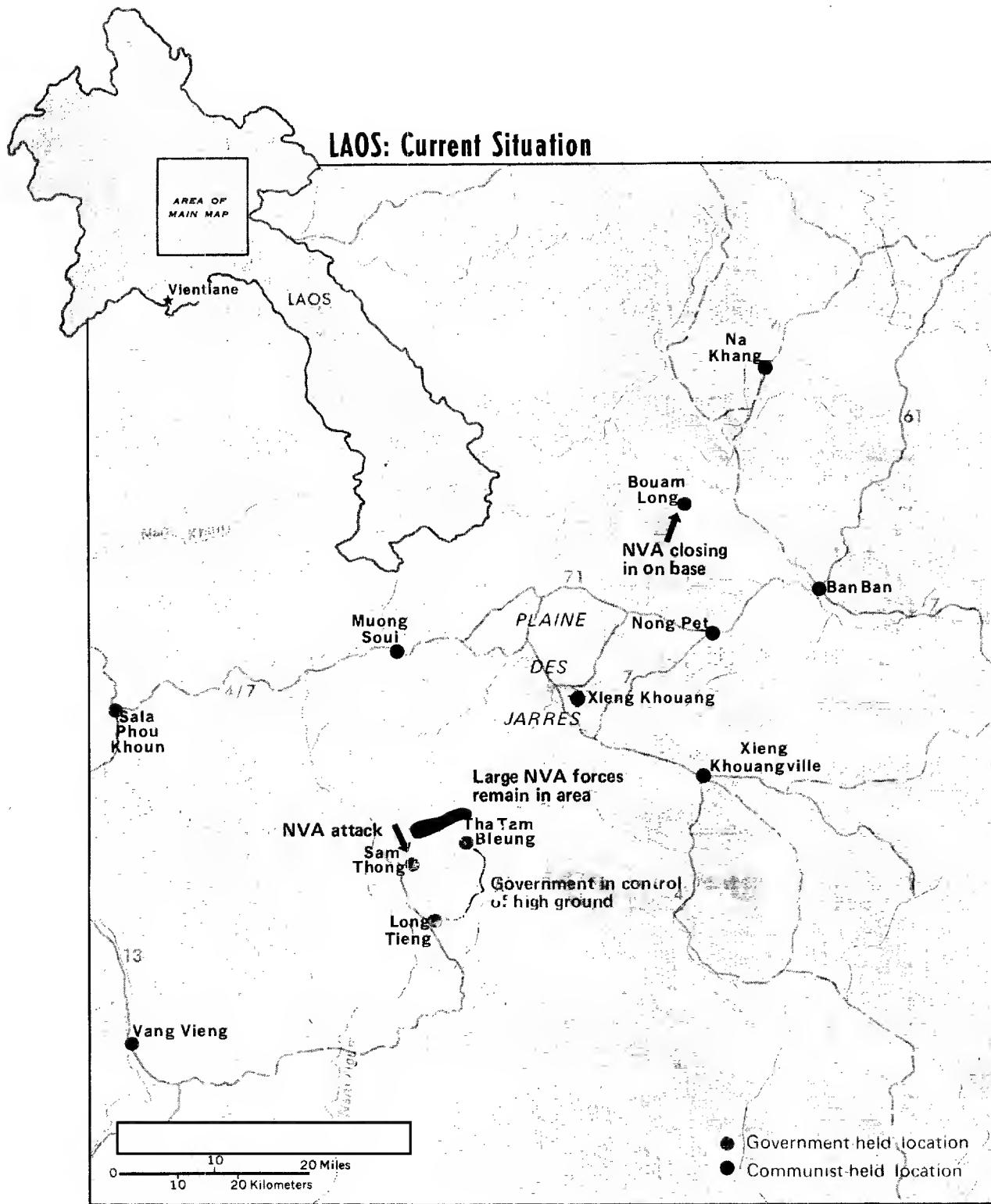
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Laos: Government forces are still making limited gains, but a sizable number of enemy troops remain within striking distance of Long Tieng.

The most significant ground action over the weekend occurred during the early morning of 12 April, when North Vietnamese forces launched an unsuccessful ground assault against the government base at Sam Thong, situated some six miles northwest of Long Tieng. This latest attack, which represents the enemy's second major attempt to overrun the base within a week, proved costly to both sides. In some of the heaviest fighting in recent weeks, government defenders suffered 15 killed while enemy losses were put at nearly twice that number.

The government has moved reinforcements into Sam Thong and is still holding all its positions, but late reports indicate that enemy troops are again moving on the base from the north. Although the enemy still poses a significant threat to Sam Thong, government guerrillas are now in control of all the prominent ridges to the northeast between Long Tieng and Tha Tam Bleung.

Southwest of the Plaine des Jarres, the North Vietnamese are continuing to strengthen their supply lines and there is little evidence to suggest that their supply situation is serious. North of the Plaine, Communist forces are closing in on the government base at Bouam Long. Government defenders have pulled back from a key position guarding the southwestern approaches, and North Vietnamese troops have begun probing defenses within a mile of the base.

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South Vietnam: Veteran and student demonstrators appear to be holding their fire, at least for the time being.

War Veterans Minister Pham Van Dong is taking a conciliatory line and has invited the chairman of the Disabled Veterans' Association to meet to discuss veterans' problems. Most veterans appear to have adopted a wait-and-see policy, pending action by the National Assembly on a new veterans' code as well as the development of arrangements to build some new housing for veterans. A veterans' group in Bien Hoa Province, just northeast of Saigon, is threatening demonstrations, however, unless its members receive more benefits from the government.

Except for two small, brief demonstrations in Saigon on 10 April, student demonstrators have also been relatively quiet in recent days. Some of the more militant students, however, are likely to be provoked by the government's announcement yesterday that beginning on 20 April, it will try 21 students before a military court on charges of treason or otherwise endangering national security. Student protesters have been demanding that the students, who were arrested in February and March, either get a speedy trial in a civil court or be released.

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USSR: Maneuvering among Soviet leaders continues with the appointment of two veteran party officials to positions in the government economic bureaucracy.

On 11 April, Pravda announced the appointment of two regional party bosses to government jobs in Moscow. L. N. Yefremov, first secretary of the Stavropol party committee, was named first deputy chairman of the State Committee for Science and Technology; and T. I. Sokolov, first secretary of the Orel party committee, was appointed first deputy chairman of the State Planning Committee. Both men, who have specialized in management of agriculture, have been in eclipse for the past several years. Yefremov was demoted from the Presidium (Politburo) following Khrushchev's removal. Sokolov had run into trouble earlier, during the period when he was responsible for party affairs in the virgin lands.

The announcement in Pravda did not indicate whether or not Yefremov and Sokolov--both of whom are members of the party Central Committee--are to replace any incumbents on these government committees. Neither is it clear how these moves fit into the pre-congress maneuvering in the Kremlin. As yet, no date has been set for the party congress, though it is widely rumored that it will be held late this fall. In the short run, the naming of two experienced party administrators to top government jobs would seem to represent an effort by the party to strengthen its control over the management of the ailing Soviet economy. Last December, Brezhnev harshly criticized the poor economic performance of 1969 and placed most of the blame on the government bureaucracy.

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European Communities: The EC Commission has revised its controversial plan for reforming the structure of European agriculture.

The original plan has been deadlocked since its submission to the Council of Ministers more than a year ago by Sicco Mansholt, a vice president of the EC Commission. Although the EC countries have become increasingly alarmed over their agricultural problems, they have been unwilling to accept Mansholt's far-reaching proposals, in part because of the staggering costs that would initially be involved.

The revised version of the plan proposes that structural reforms be carried out and financed to a large extent by the member states. The plan, however, preserves Mansholt's original aims--reducing the number of farms and farmers, diminishing the amount of land devoted to agriculture, and developing "economically viable farms."

The Commission hopes that the Council will consider these proposals when it resumes wrestling with the problem of EC agricultural surpluses at a meeting today. So far, the Council has been unsuccessfully discussing the possibility of reducing price supports to prevent the further growth of surpluses, a proposal that many consider more urgent than structural reform.

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NOTE

Nonaligned Conference: The second preparatory meeting for the third summit conference of nonaligned nations opens in Dar es Salaam today. Its main purpose will be to decide the venue, date, and provisional agenda for the summit, which may be held before the opening of the UN General Assembly this fall. The preparatory meeting is scheduled to run four days, but disputes over issues such as Cambodian representation and a possible request by the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam for a seat could prolong the meeting or cause it to break down. Approximately 50 delegations will be on hand.

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